

**Testimony**  
**Garry Brumback**  
**Town Manager, Town of Southington**  
**Environment Committee**  
**February 19, 2014**

**RE: SUPPORT - HB- 5081 - AN ACT CONCERNING PHOSPHOROUS REDUCTION REIMBURSEMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES.**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of **HB-5081, An Act Concerning Phosphorus Reduction Reimbursements to Municipalities**.

HB-5081 builds on the important work that the legislature has done to assist municipalities in meeting mandated phosphorus reduction limits to achieve statewide environmental goals.

Currently, the state Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) is in the process of implementing a “Phosphorus Reduction Strategy for Inland Non-Tidal Waters” which will impact a number of towns and cities across Connecticut, requiring costly upgrades to wastewater treatment plants to comply with more stringent phosphorus reduction limits. In some cases, this will require multimillion dollar upgrades: Southington *\$18.5 million*; Danbury *\$25- 30 million*; Wallingford *\$19 million*; Meriden *\$13.5 million*; and Cheshire *\$7.2 million*.

Unfortunately, these municipalities are being burdened with addressing what is essentially a statewide problem resulting from excessive levels of phosphorus in certain water basins.

Recognizing that these communities are bearing the brunt of achieving statewide environmental goals, the legislature adopted Public Act 13-239, which increases from 30% to 50% the amount municipalities are eligible to receive under the Clean Water Fund grant program.

Unfortunately, this increased reimbursement is only available to the first three construction contracts entered into by municipalities before July 1, 2018. This unfairly penalizes municipalities who may still be awaiting permit renewals or facing other issues in moving forward with a construction contract for phosphorus reduction plant upgrades.

HB-5081 corrects this inequity by making the remaining projects eligible for the increased reimbursement. This will assist these municipalities in achieving EPA/DEEP’s standards without unfairly burdening residents in the affected municipalities.

**We also recommend that this date be modified to July 1, 2021 to be consistent with those permits which require compliance by 2022.** In addition, we would like to discuss with DEEP the language regarding the effluent discharge criteria and whether this should be modified as well.

We would also like to take this opportunity to update you regarding the stakeholder process established under Public Act 12-155. This process has been helpful in moving forward with productive discussions with DEEP to develop a statewide phosphorus reduction plan that will 1) reduce non-point source pollution, which may help alleviate the overall pressure on municipal water pollution control authorities; 2) utilize a science-based approach for addressing nutrient issues; and 3) explore more flexible, cost-effective approaches to assist municipalities in achieving compliance with EPA standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of HB-5081.